(b) and (c) At present 135 L*PG distributors are operating in Bombay-Oil Companies will explore ways to readjust the area of gas dealers wherever feasible.

Route of the Oman-India gas pipeline

1395. SHRI SOM PAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the route of the Oman-India gas pipeline has been changed;

(b) if so, what are the final financial and physical details of the proje=t and how do these compare with the original one; and

(c) by when the work is likely *v> be* started and completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) to (c) The route of the Oman-India gas pipeline will be finalised after the detailed survey of the ocean bed which is in progress. The Oman Oil Company has indicated in investment of USD 5 billion on die project- The first pipeline to carry 28.3 MMSCMD of gas is targetted to be commissioned by mid-1999.

Proposal to accelerate oil exploration programme

1396. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARTK: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAs be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to accelerate oil exploration programme during the current plan period;

(b) if so, the initiative taken in that direction;

(c) whether any new strategy is proopsed to be adopted therefor; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) to (d) Government have approved an Accelerated Exploration Programme to be implemented during 1994—97 at an estimated cost of Rs. 6500 crores. Its major components are:—

(i) Exploration in the deep water areas.

(ii) National seismic programme

(iii) Exploration in frontier areas.

(iv) Acquisition of acreages abroad

A part of this exploration effort is contemplated to be carried out through joint ventures between ONGC|OIL and private oil companies.

Import of aviation turbine fuel

1397. DR. B. B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the cost of imported vis-a-vis indigenous Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) per kiloliter;

(b) whether Government are planning to stop the import of Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF);

(c) if so. the reasons therefor; and

(d) its impact on the operation cost of airlines operating in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT SATISH SHARMA): (a) The ceiling selling ex-storage point price of ATF *is* Rs. 9852.33/KL exclusive of Excise duties. The domestic prices of petroleum products are not always comparable with the international prices